

artists. To me, each of these kids represents an unknown but a promising future.

To the tobacco industry, every single one of these kids represents nothing more than a replacement smoker. The tobacco industry's goal is to turn each of these young athletes and budding scientists into a smoker. We know now that the tobacco industry has plotted to capture the cub scout and the kindergarten market.

We have documentation that the tobacco industry has studied the behavior of children as young as 5 to determine how susceptible they are. And their scheming has worked. Every day, every week of every year, 3,000 children become addicted to cigarettes. A third of them will die early from smoking, and those who go on to raise families will endanger their children through low birthweight complications and secondhand smoke.

Vermont and other States have done much to combat teen smoking. I applaud the parents, teachers, and State health officials who have led the battle against big tobacco at the local level. It is time now for Congress to do something too.

Ever since the Attorneys General announced their proposed settlement last June, Congress has been talking to experts and debating the best approach to reduce teen smoking. But the time for talking is behind us. And time is running out. It is critical that the Senate act on tobacco legislation in the coming weeks. We cannot allow politics to stand in the way of this rare opportunity. This issue is too important and too complicated to leave to the last minute.

As chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, I have held seven hearings on the question of what tobacco policy would be best for this country. We heard from the experts that there is no silver bullet that will solve the problem of teen smoking. But that is no excuse for inactivity. Smoking kills 400,000 people a year, and it is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States. Nine out of ten smokers became addicted as teenagers.

My home State of Vermont, unfortunately, is not immune from the problem. Our teen smoking rate is higher—higher—than the national average. More than one in every three Vermont high school students are regular smokers. More than 12,000 Vermont teens currently under age 18 will die prematurely from tobacco-related disease. That is like wiping the towns of Underhill, Jericho, Richmond, and Huntington right off the map—wiping them right off the map.

Despite the best efforts of parents, educators, and health professionals around the State over the past few years, more and more teenagers are deciding to smoke. Unless we act now to help them quit, most of these kids will continue to smoke into adulthood.

I pledge to Vermonters that I will do everything I can to enact comprehen-

sive tobacco legislation this year. In February, I introduced the Prevent Addiction To Smoking Among Teens Act, the PAST Act, to enact and improve upon the public health provisions of the tobacco settlement. Last month, the Senate Commerce Committee passed comprehensive legislation which incorporated many of the public health provisions originally proposed in the PAST Act.

As tobacco legislation moves through the Senate, I will continue my fight to ensure that we keep our eyes on the goal of improving the public health and preventing kids from smoking. Congress needs to pass legislation which will prevent kids from smoking. Even though there is no silver bullet, we do know of many approaches which have proven effective, particularly when used in combination.

A national tobacco policy must give the Food and Drug Administration full authority to regulate tobacco, the Centers for Disease Control, the National Institutes of Health, and the State health departments, and others in the fight to convince high school students not to smoke, and to treat those who have decided to do so, as well as we can, to get them to stop.

We need to make teen smoking a thing of the past. I cannot think of a better graduation present for high school seniors in Vermont and around the country than to stop teenage smoking.

Mr. President, thank you very much. I yield back the balance of my time. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 1997

The Senate continued with consideration of the bill.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I commend my colleagues, Senators JEFFORDS, KENNEDY, WELLSTONE and DEWINE for their tireless efforts to bring this bipartisan bill to the Senate floor. I hope that any remaining disagreements can be worked out in Conference.

Few issues that we have a chance to debate and vote on are as critically important to the future of this country as the one before us today. The strength of our workforce is directly linked to a lifetime of quality education and training. And never have the challenges been greater. We must remain steadfast in our efforts to continue educating and training our workforce so that more of our companies can successfully adapt to the rapid developments of modern technology.

The Workforce Investment Partnership Act is the culmination of many

years of hard work. The current maze of more than 160 separate programs which are administered by 15 separate federal agencies has become unnecessarily cumbersome for both those in need of training assistance and those employers seeking to hire skilled workers. This bill streamlines these programs by giving more authority to state and local governments, but retaining crucial federal requirements in order to ensure that the most vulnerable and deserving members of our population, including disadvantaged youth and displaced workers, receive the support and training assistance they need. This focus will ensure that these individuals have a chance to share in our nation's continued economic prosperity and growth. In addition, by emphasizing results and accountability from job training programs, our workers will be better equipped with the skills they need to land high-wage and high-skilled jobs.

I know firsthand the struggle many hard-working individuals face as their company downsizes or scales back production. For many years, the Connecticut economy was dependent on defense-oriented industries. In the past few years, many qualified, highly skilled workers in Connecticut have lost their jobs as a result of military downsizing. In the last 12 months, more than 1,500 defense related jobs were lost in my state.

The Workforce Investment Partnership Act ensures that defense employees who are adversely affected by base closings and military downsizing will have access to job training and supportive services through the National Reserve Account in title III of the Job Training Partnership Act. If these workers receive access to training, they can acquire the skills needed for employment in the technology driven economy of the 21st century.

The Connecticut economy is changing. In February, a group of 120 business leaders stated that a highly educated and trained work force is the only way that Connecticut can capitalize on the promises of the new technology driven sectors such as software development, information technology and photonics. For too long, we were focused on job loss. It is now time to focus on the rebuilding of our economy and ensure that all potential employees, including former welfare recipients and displaced workers, receive the training and skills they need.

I am especially pleased that a cornerstone of the job training bill will be streamlined service delivery. The bill accomplishes this integration by building on the One-Stop system to unify the patchwork of fragmented job training and employment programs into a single, customer-friendly environment. The proposed legislation would expand the concept of universal access to services for job seekers and businesses without eligibility criteria.

Connecticut is nearing completion of implementation of its One-Stop Career

Center System, Connecticut Works, which is being financed through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. This network has reformed the delivery of job training services in Connecticut. To date, a total of 16 centers have been created across the state and I have had the privilege of visiting many of them. Gone are the dreary unemployment centers of the past.

Each of the centers in Connecticut offers a broad array of services including a variety of job search workshops and self-service research rooms with computer and Internet access. A wide range of written material is provided in the research rooms, and customers have access to fax machines and telephones to assist them in their job search. Enhanced and coordinated services to businesses are provided through the use of an Employer Contact Management System. Customer surveys and performance measurements ensure that customer needs are addressed. The partnership with the State library has brought access to electronic labor market and job search services through local libraries to over one hundred sites throughout Connecticut, bringing services to more customers with expanded days and hours of operation.

Mr. President, vocational educational activities are also provided for within the Workforce legislation. Significantly, WIPA will put into place challenging performance measures to gauge the efficiency of the educational programs it oversees. These measures will require proficient training in the areas of job readiness skills, vocational skills, and placement, retention, and completion of educational opportunities. The Carl D. Perkins vocational educational title, which will separately appropriate and administer all vocational educational programs, will teach participants computer skills and new technologies to prepare them for the burgeoning high-tech labor market.

WIPA further provides for the coordination of adult education and job training systems, allowing adult education to play a crucial role in a participant's job training program. In the area of adult education and literacy, WIPA specifically targets those communities demonstrating significant illiteracy rates to receive adult education programs on a priority basis. I am pleased that the Workforce legislation also includes a provision that will direct funds designated to support English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to those ESL programs in communities with designated need. This means that ESL programs with waiting lists—those in communities with the greatest need for the valuable services these programs provide—will receive funds on a prioritized basis.

Mr. President, in order to better assist non-native English speakers and fully assimilate them into our society, we must help them become more fluent in English. I can think of few more important factors in determining whether or not someone new to this society will

successfully make this difficult transition than their ability to speak English.

A clear and effective grasp of the English language is still the best indicator of success for non-native English speakers. The ability to speak English for anyone in today's marketplace represents an "open door," Mr. President. This "open door" can lead to greater employment and advancement opportunities for those whose first language is not English.

The reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act, offered as an amendment to the Workforce legislation, is critically important legislation that I am proud to cosponsor. The Rehabilitation Act provides comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services designed to help individuals with disabilities become more employable and achieve greater independence and integration into society.

Under the Rehabilitation Act, States, with assistance provided by the federal government in the manner of formula-derived grants, provide a broad array of services to individuals with disabilities that includes assessment, counseling, vocational and other educational services, work related placement services, and rehabilitation technology services. In 1995 alone, Mr. President, more than 1.25 million Americans with disabilities were served by vocational rehabilitation programs.

I am particularly pleased that a provision dealing with assistive technology was included in the reauthorization legislation. This provision, Section 508, will require the federal government to provide assistive technology to Federal employees with disabilities. This provision will put into place for the first time regulations requiring the federal government to provide its employees with disabilities with access to appropriate technology suited to their individual needs.

This legislation would allow the federal government to take the lead in providing critical access to information technology to all federal employees with disabilities in this country. It strengthens the federal requirement that electronic and information technology purchased by federal agencies be accessible to their employees with disabilities.

Electronic and information technology accessibility is essential for federal employees to maintain a meaningful employment experience, as well as to meet their full potential. We live in a world where information and technology are synonymous with professional advancement. Increasingly, essential job functions have come to involve the use of technology, and where it is inaccessible, job opportunities that others take for granted are foreclosed to people with disabilities.

Presently, there are approximately 145,000 individuals with disabilities in the federal workforce. Roughly 61 percent of these employees hold permanent positions in professional, adminis-

trative, or technical occupations. Nationally, there are 49 million Americans who have disabilities, nearly half of them have a severe disability. Yet most mass market information technology is designed without consideration for their needs.

It is critical, Mr. President, given the rapid introduction into the workforce of novel technologically-advanced products, that persons with disabilities not be allowed to fall behind. The federal government must truly be an equal opportunity employer, and this equal opportunity must apply fully to individuals with special needs.

I view Section 508 as a hopeful first step in an effort to ensure that all individuals with disabilities have access to the assistive technology providing them the ability to reach their full ability. Though Section 508 will presently only affect federal employees, it is my hope that one day all individuals with disabilities will have the same access to assistive technology now afforded federal employees because of Section 508.

Lastly, Mr. President, I would like to commend Senators JEFFORDS, DEWINE, KENNEDY and WELLSTONE for the important role they each played in making the Workforce legislation and the reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act a reality. They worked closely with myself and my staff to address numerous concerns and for that I wish to thank them.

Ms. COLLINS. The Workforce Investment Partnership Act restates the Senate's long commitment to vocational education, adult education, job training, and vocational rehabilitation. Yet it does more than just continue this tradition; it builds upon our experiences and moves us forward—improving our education and training programs. S. 1186 will provide better opportunities for America's citizens to get the skills they, as individuals, need to obtain work and that America's businesses need to retain their competitive edge in the global economy.

S. 1186 is a commitment to meeting the challenges faced by America to produce the workforce that we need for the 21st century. It incorporates almost seventy categorical programs and builds an integrated workforce system as a replacement for the current group of fragmented or duplicative programs.

The vocational education section is particularly significant in its emphasis on the inclusion of a strong academic component in vocational education assuring that students in vocational programs receive the strongest possible education and the broadest possible base on which to build careers. It requires the states to explain how duplication will be avoided, and how the activities of related programs will be coordinated. Finally it requires the establishment of rigorous performance measures of both state and local progress toward concrete goals.

The job training components will lead to more comprehensive and efficient state systems for workforce development with linkages to strengthen welfare to work activities. It gives greater authority and flexibility to the states in the way each responds to the education and training needs of its citizens and its business community. For example, under S. 1186, a governor in a state with a "Work-Flex" program can waive requirements that prevent a local workforce area from responding efficiently to local needs. It allows governors to consolidate administrative funds and state reserve funds from different funding streams to coordinate and manage the use of these funds for a state's priorities.

The Workforce Investment Partnership Act will also encourage efforts by the states to improve the integration of previously separate programs, a change that is especially welcome in Maine where extensive efforts are already underway to coordinate the efforts of the vocational high schools, the technical colleges, adult education and job training programs and vocational rehabilitation. This streamlining and integration of federal programs will support Maine's priorities in this area.

I am especially pleased that the bill includes incentive grants that will reward states that exceed their goals and will support states in the development of innovative programs tailored to their own needs. This will result in new models and methods for vocational education and job training. The incentive grants should encourage the states to move toward the important goal of improved integration of vocational education, adult education and job training.

This bill also incorporates the Rehabilitation Act, which I cosponsored. In doing so it provides important links between vocational rehabilitation and a state's workforce system. It simplifies the access of persons with disabilities to vocational rehabilitation services and streamlines the administration of these services.

The Workforce Investment Partnership Act challenges each state to improve the vocational education and vocational rehabilitation that it provides to its citizens, to be sure that its vocational and job training programs respond to and anticipate the changing demands of the economy, and that it fosters programs helping those on welfare move to work. This bill will help the states turn these challenges into opportunities.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I am very pleased we are about to pass what may be one of the most significant and positive pieces of legislation to be enacted into law this Congress—S. 1186, the Workforce Investment Partnership Act. It is the outcome of an open, cooperative and bipartisan process beginning with a number of hearings on the subject last year in our Labor Subcommittee on Employment

and Training. As soon as possible, following passage here, I hope we can proceed to a conference with members of the House and reconcile the differences between this bill and the one which that body passed last year. Some of those differences are substantial, but most are not fundamental.

This major re-write of job training and workforce development law is vitally needed. If we can keep a conference bill close in most respects to this Senate bill, it will, upon enactment, represent an important step forward for the country's economy, workers and businesses. I agree with President Clinton's statement regarding this Senate bill, contained in a letter he wrote recently to the Majority Leader. The President correctly observed that the bill is "essential to widening the circle of opportunity for more Americans and keeping our economy growing steady and strong."

I would like to commend the Chairman of the full Committee, Senator JEFFORDS, as well as the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Employment and Training, Senator DEWINE, for their leadership on the bill. Senator DEWINE in particular has been tireless in pushing the process forward to make this bill happen. I commend my colleague for his work, as well as that of his staff. Likewise, I thank my friend and colleague, the Ranking Member of the full Labor Committee, Senator KENNEDY, as well as his staff, for their work on this bill. It has been a formidable amount of labor. Department of Labor officials and staff also have provided an enormous amount of technical assistance. We appreciate their dedication.

Arriving at this point has required compromise. As is usually the case with a bill of this magnitude, no senator or group with an interest in this key area of federal policy is likely to call our bill perfect. But the wide array of organizations and associations who support it are testimony to the fact that we have engaged in a very democratic process. We have endorsements of the bill from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, The National Association of Manufacturers, the National Association of Private Industry Councils, the Society for Human Resource Management, the National Alliance of Business, the Business Round Table, the National League of Cities, the National Conference of State Legislators, the National Association of Counties, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Job Corps Coalition, the American Vocational Association, the American Association of Community Colleges, and the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Technical Education, to name a few. It is a good bill, with widespread support.

The Workforce Investment Partnership Act will fundamentally improve our federal system of job training. It incorporates adult and vocational education without threatening those programs' separate funding streams. With

the inclusion of Senator DEWINE's amendment, it will also include reauthorization and improvement of vocational rehabilitation programs, again without threatening separate funding for vocational rehabilitation programs.

The bill will help coordinate, streamline and decentralize our federal job training system. At the same time, it will make that system more accountable to real performance measures. It gives private sector employers—the people who have jobs to offer and who need workers with the right skills—a greater role in directing policy at the state and local level, which is where most decision-making power resides in this bill.

S. 1186 will move the whole country to where Minnesota and a number of other states have already moved decisively: to a system of One-Stop service centers where people can get all the information they need in one location. It will replace currently overbureaucratized systems in many states and localities with systems driven more by the needs of those who utilize them. Adults seeking training will receive Individual Training Accounts to give them direct control over their own careers. High quality labor market information will be accessible through the One-Stops, and training providers will be required to report publicly on their performance. Men and women will have the ability to make their own choices based on the best information about which profession they should pursue, about the skills and training they'll need, and about the best place to get those skills and that training.

I have visited Minnesota One-Stops. They work. I would like to commend the Minnesota Department of Economic Security, by the way, which is the agency responsible for job training in my state. Commissioner R. Jane Brown and her staff do excellent and important work. I appreciate the cooperation we have received from them throughout the legislative process on this bill.

The bill targets resources from the federal level to those who need them. It assures separate funding to adults, to youth, and to dislocated workers according to state formulae, and also according to formulae within states. There was no attempt this time to do away with NAFTA Trade Adjustment Assistance or to threaten other important dislocated worker assistance. There was no effort to drastically reduce funding for job training systems based on hoped-for savings from consolidation of programs. That is crucial. This bill does not overreach. It does not block-grant job training, adult education and vocational education programs. It retains crucial federal priorities, then allows state and local authorities to decide how best to address their needs.

For example, even when our economy is performing generally well, as it currently is, many workers will lose their jobs due to forces beyond their control,

due to economic change. We cannot abandon Americans who can and want to be productive. We need to respond quickly to plant closings and mass layoffs with job search assistance and retraining for new jobs. The current dislocated worker program serves about half a million dislocated American workers a year. It usually succeeds in training displaced workers for new jobs—jobs which provide over 90 percent of their previous wages.

It is even more true that many youth, especially in poor urban and rural areas, are being left behind by our prosperity. Many have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of school. This harms us all. We lose productivity. We lose revenue. Most importantly, we lose the potential of our young people. The bill's Out-of-School Youth initiative is extremely important. It targets funds directly to youth in high-poverty urban and rural areas. It concentrates its resources to help bring fundamental change to the neighborhoods it will serve. It emphasizes work and private sector employment. And it is already paid for. Congress provided a \$250 million advance appropriation for the initiative last year, contingent upon enactment of this bill.

One of the principles we had in mind as we drafted the bill is the following: we wanted the money and the decision-making power to go down to the local level. We wanted this to be a decentralized system. The bill achieves that. The governors have a strong role in this system, as they should. Governors write their state plans. They name the statewide workforce partnership. They receive the money on a formula basis. They administer the programs statewide. They have a good deal of flexibility.

But the local level is just as important. This bill represents a crucial step forward in that respect. Money and decision-making power flow down to the local level. The bill includes an in-state formula funding mechanism. Local workforce boards selected by local government leaders will make policy at the local level. Local business people, local elected officials and local citizens are in the best position to know local workforce needs.

We received important assistance in drafting the bill from national organizations representing different levels of government—the governors, mayors, state and local elected officials, as well as counties. Our job training system requires coordination and cooperation among all levels of government. The "governance coalition" that provided key advice for us played a vitally helpful role.

The Federal Government is providing a lot of money for this system. What we ask is that it be spent according to certain priorities. We believe we are correct to establish priorities—a stream of money for adults, a stream for dislocated workers, a stream for youth. And we ask that reasonable performance objectives are met. That is

another key feature of the bill. We require measurable results. For too many years appropriators have correctly asked us, "how do we know whether the programs are delivering any benefits?" It is appropriate to require measurable results. The bill requires states and local workforce boards to establish and meet measurable standards for success in placement of trainees in jobs related to the training they received, in wages that trainees receive over 6-month and 12-month periods, and other relevant measures.

In addition to programs for adults, youth and dislocated workers, the job training title of the bill also contains renewal of four important "national" job training programs. These are programs currently authorized by the Job Training Partnership Act and operated on a national basis by the Department of Labor, rather than through the job training infrastructures of the 50 states. One of these is the Job Corps program. The Hubert H. Humphrey Job Corps Center in St. Paul is one of the best-performing Job Corps centers in the nation. Last year we had Ralph DiBattista, former director of that center, as well as Dave McKenzie, the current director, at our Subcommittee hearing on youth training. They were joined that day by Susan Lees, a very impressive young trainee at the Humphrey Center, at that time on her way to becoming an auto technician at a Ford dealership.

The Job Corps and other federal employment training programs for the nation's youth represent a crucial and cost-effective investment. Providing opportunities to youth, especially at-risk youth, is absolutely necessary. Training allows youth to gain the skills they need to be productive, to make the most of their abilities, and ultimately to support themselves and become fully contributing citizens in our economy and society.

The bill also renews current national Native American programs, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker programs, and Veterans programs. These are key elements of the country's system of helping to ensure that those Americans who need and qualify for training in order to be the most productive workers they can be get the best and most cost-effective services that the federal government can provide.

I am pleased we were able to make some improvements in the job training programs in the bill with respect to veterans. As a member of the Veterans Affairs Committee, I wanted to be sure that veterans job training programs would serve today's veterans. Therefore we updated the program's eligibility provision to ensure that Gulf War veterans and other veterans with significant barriers to employment, including homeless veterans, will be served. The managers' amendment also makes an improvement for veterans in the bill's state plan section. It will require that Governors, as they write and implement their state plans, provide

reasonable assurances that veterans will receive services on a fair basis in state-administered programs.

I also am pleased we were able to include in the bill provisions to continue the authorization and operation of four rural Concentrated Employment Programs (CEPs). These CEPs currently operate in Minnesota, Kentucky, Montana and Wisconsin. Congress established CEPs in 1964 as part of the War on Poverty's Economic Opportunity Act. With the creation of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) program, Senator Humphrey and Congressman Perkins acted to continue an authorization for the four CEPs I mentioned. When the Job Training Partnership Act was passed in 1983, they were continued again. The CEPs do an excellent job serving difficult, high-unemployment rural areas. I intend to work hard if necessary to retain this provision in conference, although I anticipate no opposition.

There are five amendments to the bill which we have agreed to accept. The first of these is by Mr. DEWINE. It is the vocational rehabilitation bill. The Rehabilitation Act assists well over a million Americans with disabilities annually through comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services. It is a crucial and successful set of programs. It embodies the commitment of the federal government and the American public to those among us with physical and mental disabilities. I am very satisfied with this set of improvements to that Act. Jay Johnson of East Grand Forks, Minnesota testified on behalf of the National Council on Independent Living at a Subcommittee hearing last year. Mr. Johnson is executive director of "Options," a center for independent living in East Grand Forks. I am very proud of the disability community in Minnesota for their advocacy and for their determination. I think this bill does right by them.

The amendment by Mr. LAUTENBERG gives units of local government which are currently service delivery areas under the Job Training Partnership Act and which have population of 200,000 or more an automatic right to appeal to the Secretary of Labor a decision by a Governor not to continue that area as an SDA. Without the amendment the bill would give units of local government with a population of 500,000 or more automatic certification to continue as SDAs, whereas those with 200,000 or more would be entitled only to an automatic right to request continuance as SDAs. I consider the amendment by the senator from New Jersey to be an improvement to the bill, and I intend to support it in conference, as well.

I do not support either of the amendments offered by my friend from Missouri, Mr. ASHCROFT. We are accepting them for now, but I hope they can be modified or removed in conference. The first would require that job training service recipients be drug tested. It is bad policy. It is an unwarranted invasion of privacy. It is wrong because it

sends a distasteful message about a presumption regarding Americans who benefit from improving their skills through job training—a presumption which I hope none of us really holds. And it would drain large amounts of money from the program, money which should go to training.

The second Ashcroft amendment also is objectionable. It prohibits funds authorized in the bill from funding activities authorized in the School to Work Act. Our bill does not authorize making grants under the School to Work Act. But we encourage states and localities to integrate and coordinate their vocational education and job training systems. Of course we want to facilitate lifelong learning and the continual development of productive skills.

School to Work Programs have been a great success. They take a new approach to learning. They are programs which operate on the idea that a young person learns best when he or she can apply school-learning to life situations. In March of 1996, I invited a School to Work student to Washington to tell his story. Cameron Dick was a student at the American Indian Opportunity Industrial Center, one of nine schools in the Phillips area of Minneapolis. Phillips is predominantly poor and has one of the highest concentrations of Native Americans among urban centers in the United States. The American Indian OIC is in its fourth year of a 5-year Urban Opportunity Grant for its School to Work program. It works with high school dropouts who have decided to give high school another shot by both educating and training them for jobs. The idea is to "Get a diploma and get a paycheck." Cameron was a high school dropout, but through the OIC program became an A student, participated in afternoon employment programs and tutored other young people. The programs work.

Mr. President, I believe this Congress will succeed where we did not during the last Congress. I am very hopeful that following passage of this bill we can reach an acceptable conference agreement with the House and that we can then send major, important legislation to the President for his signature.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, this morning I rise in support of the Workforce Investment Partnership Act. This bill was unanimously passed out of the Labor and Human Resources Committee. It is good and sensible legislation, crafted in a bipartisan fashion. I commend Subcommittee Chairman DEWINE and Senator WELLSTONE as well as Chairman JEFFORDS and Ranking Member KENNEDY for their excellent leadership. There is one section in this legislation of particular importance to me; one that I believe merits special attention. If this body is successful in passing S. 1886, this program will benefit greatly. The section I am referring to is Job Corps.

Job Corps is America's only national residential education and training program for at risk youths. I emphasize

only, Mr. President, because my colleagues need to be aware that there is no other program that annually assists more than 65,000 of this country's most disadvantaged young men and women to become meaningful and productive members of society. Job Corps is the largest and most comprehensive program that offers a second chance to those who would otherwise be left behind. The young men and women who make a commitment to themselves and the Job Corps program deserve our support. This program ensures them access to educational and vocational training, fully preparing them to meet the needs of this country's employers. Indeed, a recent survey of small businesses indicated that a lack of trained employees is the largest current impediment to business growth. As a result, the Job Corps program provides invaluable assistance not only to disadvantaged youth, but also to employers and the host communities of Job Corps centers, which benefit from community service projects completed by students.

This bill represents a comprehensive Congressional effort to enhance all components of the Job Corps program. Great pains have been taken to create a continuum from the day a Job Corps student is recruited into the program to the day that student starts his or her job, and beyond.

Mr. President, let me take a minute to expand on these improvements. Job Corps has been and continues to be a model for other education and training programs. The placement rate of the program is phenomenal: this year over 80% of Job Corps graduates will be placed in good paying jobs, enter the military, or go onto post-secondary education. The performance measurement standards of Job Corps have long been praised for being thorough and rigorous. These demanding standards have stimulated the program's ongoing self-assessment and improvement over the years. Thanks to this legislation, Job Corps' performance standards can serve as a model for other programs. With enactment of this bill, all programs under WIPA will be challenged to increase their performance and accountability to achieve the results Job Corps does.

Mr. President, support for this legislation will help Job Corps become even better. First, with this legislation, Job Corps will become a core partner with one-stop training centers, making sure that every young, disadvantaged person walking into a neighborhood one-stop site will learn about this program and know it is an option. If the young person is ready to commit to his or her future, pledging not to drink or take drugs, the program is ready to offer an intensive, self-paced, state of the art education and training. Second, every Job Corps campus will form partnerships with the private sector in order to develop training programs suitable for available, local employment; identify job opportunities for students; and

help integrate the Job Corps campus and facilities into the fabric of a community. Third, a stringent process will be put in place to ensure that poor performing centers are quickly identified and offered help to improve their performance. Finally, every year, Congress will receive a report on the program's performance that will include how many students graduated from each center and from which trade, how many were employed, their wages when hired, and what these students are making a year later. This kind of information will be instrumental to make sure we improve upon the success that has been Job Corps' for more than 30 years.

Mr. President, in the Administration's current budget President Clinton has followed the initiative taken by Congress last year to moderately expand the program. Support for such expansion was demonstrated overwhelmingly when forty-one of my colleagues joined me in a letter to Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman SPECTER and Ranking Member HARKIN in support of this budget increase. Job Corps gains this breadth of support in Congress because Members are aware of the positive impact it has on literally millions of lives. This legislation improves upon a program with a demonstrated record of success. Therefore, Members can be confident that the program will continue to serve more disadvantaged young people with as high a rate of success. It is my hope, Mr. President, that soon the Job Corps program will become truly national, with a center in every state of our nation. My home state of Rhode Island is currently involved in the application process for a center. Our Governor, local elected officials, employers, educational institutions, and civic organizations have all committed to developing a high-performance center in our state. I have been actively working on the federal level to assist them.

Thank you, Mr. President. I urge my colleagues to support this worthy legislation.

AMENDMENT NO. 2329, AS AMENDED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2329, as amended.

The amendment (No. 2329), as amended, was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the committee substitute?

If there is no objection, the committee substitute amendment, as amended, is agreed to.

The committee substitute amendment, as amended, was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Labor Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1385, the Employment

Training and Literacy Act, and the Senate proceed to its consideration. I further ask unanimous consent that all after the enacting clause be stricken and the text of S. 1186, as amended, be inserted in lieu thereof, the bill be read a third time, and a vote occur on passage of H.R. 1385 on Tuesday, May 5, at 5:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 1186) as amended, was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. JEFFORDS. I ask unanimous consent that, at 4:30 on Tuesday, there be 60 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form for closing remarks prior to the vote on the passage of the bill. I further ask unanimous consent that, following passage of the bill, the Senate insist on its amendment and request a conference with the House and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate. I finally ask unanimous consent that S. 1186 be placed back on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. JEFFORDS. I yield back the remainder of my time, and I also have authority to yield back the remaining time of the minority.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now begin a period of morning business.

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Georgia for 1 hour.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, the hearings that the Senate Finance Committee has been conducting on the Internal Revenue Service—the adjectives that have been used to describe it are “startling,” “stunning,” “unbelievable.” I do believe most of the American public who have seen this unfold before their eyes are aghast at some of the assertions and allegations that have been made.

Recently, I became very concerned that the IRS was still conducting random audits. They indicated to me that they were not. So I asked the General Accounting Office to verify to me that random audits were not a tool of the Internal Revenue Service. A report was issued dated February 1998: “Report to the Honorable Paul Coverdell, U.S. Senate, Tax Administration, IRS Use of Random Selection in Choosing Tax Returns for Audits.”

On page 2, at the very top, it says, “IRS officials did identify 6 projects involving subpopulations of taxpayers with indications of noncompliance from which taxpayers were randomly selected for audit.” Let me repeat that—“from which taxpayers were randomly selected for audit.”

I made a public statement of deep concern about the fact I had been ad-

vised they were not and the General Accounting Office said they were. On the same occasion, on or about early March, the Internal Revenue Service issued an interim memorandum to its employees, and they quote me saying the disclosures “are a result of General Accounting Office review requested by myself to examine random audits.”

Then they told their employees that during fiscal years 1994 through 1996, “the IRS did not randomly select returns for audit from either the population of all taxpayers or all returns. IRS has about 40 audit sources which are programs and techniques used to select potentially noncompliant returns for audit. IRS audit sources do not rely on random selection from the population of all returns but IRS selects returns having characteristics indicative of potential noncompliance.”

Here is the key point, right here in the publication from the IRS. There are three little dots, and then it says, “No taxpayers outside of these six subpopulations were selected at random for audit.” Dot dot dot.

Mr. President, the “dot dot dot” is this sentence: “IRS officials did identify six projects involving subpopulations of taxpayers with indications of noncompliance from which taxpayers were randomly audited.” Dot dot dot.

Now, the tax system is complicated beyond belief. Everybody knows the story where they gave a similar family to 50 accountants. It was an exercise that some major publication went through. They all turned them in. Not one of the 50 turned it in the same way, and not one of them was correct.

So it is easy to make administrative errors. I have to tell you, Mr. President, “dot dot dot” is not an administrative oversight. “Dot dot dot” left out this sentence intentionally. It quoted everything else in the paragraph but left that sentence out.

If the American taxpayers did that, they would be in deep trouble. This is why there is no credibility anymore. They just don’t have any credibility. There are a lot of good folks over there. I have met them; I know of them. A lot of them have been very cooperative with our office trying to solve problems. But there is just no credibility. It is this kind of behavior—in fact, this is sort of tame.

It is this kind of occasion that has caused an outraged population to call on a Congress to do something bold, to bring this kind of behavior under control.

Mr. President, that is exactly what is going to happen in this Congress. The IRS is not going to be the same institution by the end of this Congress.

Mr. President, I think the Senator from Ohio will be here momentarily and we will hear from him regarding his hearings on the Internal Revenue Service.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, we have now been joined by my distinguished colleague from Ohio, who was talking to me moments ago about hearings he held in his own home State. I yield up to 15 minutes to the Senator from Ohio for his remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Ohio.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Georgia for holding this session where we have a chance to talk about the problems connected with the IRS. He has been a true leader in this issue.

This is a matter of great importance and interest to the taxpayers across this country. Mr. President, it is becoming clearer every day that we simply have to reform the IRS. The facts of IRS abuse are, by now, well known. As the hearings continue, we get more information every single day. The essential facts are very disturbing.

In 1996, the IRS answered only 20 percent of its phone calls.

An IRS report released in January of this year showed that one out of every four IRS revenue officers and supervisors felt pressured to achieve enforcement goals. Tax collection statistics were used to evaluate the performance of employees—and the district offices were ranked on how much taxes they collected—collected from us.

In 1993, the IRS gave incorrect information to taxpayers a stunning 8.5 million times. In 1987, the GAO said that 47% of the calls to the IRS resulted in incorrect information.

A recent survey actually found that one out of two Americans would rather be mugged than audited.

MAUREEN SCHAEFFER

I recently held a hearing in Toledo on the issue of IRS reform and tax reform. One of the witnesses was Maureen Schaeffer, from Lakewood, Ohio.

Maureen told us she was married for twenty years to an abusive, alcoholic husband. He was the sole wage earner and handled all of their tax matters, and she signed all of their joint tax returns. She worked in the home, raising their seven children and caring for his invalid mother. After twenty years of marriage, Maureen realized the negative impact that he was having on their children—so she filed for divorce. At the time of the divorce, Maureen knew that her ex-husband was being audited by the IRS, and in the settlement agreement reached between them the ex-husband assumed responsibility for all back taxes.

In the summer of 1996, the ex-husband filed for bankruptcy. His only creditors were his ex-wife—Maureen—and the IRS. Shortly after the filing of the bankruptcy, Maureen was notified by the IRS that she owed \$150,000 to the IRS. One week later, the IRS gave her